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ABSTRACT

Although subtle compared to the politicization of education in a totalitarian state, American education has been politicized, with liberal ideologies affecting both curricula and teachers. This gradual politicization of the classroom will, if left unchecked, lead to infringements on individual freedom and the right to the pursuit of happiness. Evidence of this phenomenon can be seen in changes in textbooks over the last 15-20 years and in the change in attitude of the National Education Association (NEA). Textbooks contain information that is carefully selected and presented to create attitudes and impressions rather than systematically building toward a foundation of knowledge. The result is a widening gap in cultural literacy paralleled with an increasingly socialist mindset. Perhaps more harmful are politically biased and motivated teachers, who may go beyond educating students and begin to indoctrinate students. Classroom discussions on current events often do not put events into historical perspective or present pros and cons equally and fairly. Teachers' unions have begun to lobby for noneducation issues. Fundamental changes have to be made in the educational system. Academic integrity must be returned to the curriculum; teachers must recognize and accept their professional responsibilities; and teachers must respond to parents' concerns about the education of their children. It is suggested that the NEA has become a labor union, rather than a professional organization. To bring the organization back to its origins, teachers should consider state exams for licensing, peer reviews, and taking a keen interest in the education of future teachers. (DCS)

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The Politicization of the Classroom

Marcella D. Hadeed

"Totalitarian regimes have long recognized the teacher's power to mold ideas, influence behavior, and shape belief. That is why their schools are integral parts of the government-control apparatus. . . ."

Chester E. Finn
Commentary, February 1983.

According to Chester E. Finn, "one of the abiding strengths of American education . . . is that we have not politicized the classroom, or turned teachers into propagandists, or willfully instructed our children through curricula that seek to indoctrinate."[1] For Americans, education is learning to read, to write and to compute. Education is the transmittal of knowledge of history, philosophy, literature, science and art . . . of Western culture. Students learn to reason and analyze and make judgments. According to Edwin J. DeLattre, President of St. John's College, "the first and most fundamental feature of education worthy of the name is that it promotes aspiration in the young, that is, it promotes the desire to become more and better than one is. The encouragement of aspiration depends, above all, on both intellectual and moral propagation."[2]

Quietly and ominously, however, politics is creeping

into the once sacrosanct American classroom. It does not appear in the form of one more fad on an already bloated list of electives from which young groping minds must select a certain total in order to obtain their diplomas. If it were that isolated and easily identified, astute students who are hungry for substance and truth in education could avoid it. Neither is it only a distorted version of the course we once knew as U.S. Government. The politics to which I refer is an increasing presence, brought about by the implantation of dogma spun by liberal ideologues, which permeate education like a poisonous vapor. Unless immediate and courageous reforms are courageously undertaken to stop the process, the gradual politicization of the classroom instruction will have a cumulative and corruptive effect on American education that, in time, will permanently alter American society in ways that will infringe on individual freedom and our right to the pursuit of happiness.

The politicization of American education is subtle compared to a totalitarian state. The means used to achieve this end are what one might expect, however: curricula and teachers.

Evidence of this phenomenon can be seen in changes in textbooks over the last 15-20 years and the change in attitude of the largest teachers' union, the National Education Association. For example, in public school textbooks, author Frances Fitzgerald (no conservative) discovered, "there is either no past, no history at all—only 'social studies' and 'current events'—or else, a potpourri of 'pasts,' each tied to some current theme such as ethnicity, sexuality or politics."[3] Mary Futrell, President of NEA, speaking at the 1982 NEA convention (then NEA-union secretary-treasurer) said, "there's no alternative to political involvement. Instruction and professional development (of teachers) have been on the back burner to us compared to political action."[4]

In the past 15-20 years curricula in the schools have been diluted—geography and history have become "social stud-

ies," civics has become "contemporary world problems" and American Government is taught, in many cases, with biased textbooks. In one study done by Concerned Educators Against Forced Unionism (CEAFU) over 200 classroom materials for high school history and government classes were reviewed. The review focused on the author's treatment of the right to work issue. According to CEAFU, of the materials reviewed, 81 discussed the right to work issue. Of those that discussed the issue, 52 (or 64%) discussed it unfairly, inaccurately, or both.[5] For example, CEAFU evaluated *The Promise of Democracy*, Graff and Bohannan; (Rand McNally, 1978) as follows:

TEXT

Breaking Tradition

. . . Unions were also set up in sections of the country that had blocked organizing in the past. For example, in several southern states, it was illegal to form a union . . . " (1) pg. 304.

End of Chapter, "People at Work," questions:
. . . Look at the labor-union song on page 278. What other evidence of the notion that there is strength in union can be found in this chapter? (2)

EVALUATION

(1) This is misinformation. Twenty states are Right to Work states which make it illegal to *force* membership in a union in order to get or maintain a job. It is completely legal in every state to "form a union."

(2) This is direct evidence of a bias. The omission of any discussion of the Right to Work issue in this chapter on "People at Work" which is 33 pages long is a not very subtle indication of the textbook's tone.

NOTE: Unexamined assumptions are the most insidious incidences of bias and the most difficult to overcome. As an integral part of the labor movement, the Right to Work issue deserves some treatment in this discussion. The provision 14(b) of the Taft Hartley Law is a critical and increasingly

important question in labor relations and the nation's industrial history. It is the responsibility of educators and textbook publishers to present every issue in its objective entirety and to avoid becoming advocates consciously or unconsciously, for political or ideological positions.

Another example of bias in textbooks can be found in a recent study done by Robert Bryan, a Washington writer who holds a Ph.D. from the University of London in Ecclesiastical history. The study, done for *LEARN, INC.*, found that history textbooks almost totally ignore the role of religion in American life after 1700. According to Robert Bryan:

> One of the most revealing features of any historical narrative is its treatment of religion. Religion, whatever it happens to be, is always fundamental to the institutions of society; therefore, its influence is always pervasive. The customs and institutions of any society will be shaped by its members' religion—their fundamental beliefs about the nature of the world they live in and their duty towards it. Both for continuity and for historical change, it is necessary to understand these beliefs; a work is not historical, but anachronistic if it fails to place the past in the context of its fundamental beliefs.[6]

With the school curriculum thoroughly skewed, politicization of learning was inevitable. It is not that modern textbooks are without information; rather it's that the information is carefully selected and presented to create attitudes and impressions instead of systematically building toward a foundation of knowledge. The result is a widening gap in cultural literacy paralleled with an increasingly socialist mindset.

In recent years, under the guise of "just raising the issue," some educators are saturating school districts with politically-biased materials. Most pervasive are the curricula on nuclear war. One organization, Educators for Social Responsibility, has developed a curriculum resource guide for "dealing with the issues of nuclear war in the classroom." According to Chester E. Finn, information included in the resource guide has little to do with the classroom directly. Rather, Finn explains, it consists of sample letters

that teachers can send to parents, school boards and newspaper editors to invite their participation in a "day of dialogue."[7]

What is a "Day of Dialogue?" The *Denver Post* ran an article headlined: "50 Schools Teach Pupils Realities of Nuclear War." According to the article:

> Students at about 50 Denver-area schools Monday found a new subject included in their studies: Nuclear War. Monday's speeches and student discussions about the dangers of nuclear war were part of a nationwide 'Day of Dialogue' organized by a group of teachers and others known as Educators for Social Responsibility.
>
> Sister Mary Gleason, information coordinator for the Denver chapter of the group, said more such programs will be conducted at area schools in the next few weeks.
>
> Most of the programs at area schools seemed to be a distinctly anti-war tone, but Sister Gleason said, "it really isn't meant to be onesided. It is meant to be raising the issue. . . ."[8]

It seems strange that educators should feel it necessary in Denver to raise what is so obviously a military issue. Located at Cheyenne Mountain are the headquarters for the North American Air Defense Command, which is headed up by a four-star Air Force General. Lowery Air Force Base, which among other functions, specializes in military intelligence training, is also in Denver. At Fort Carson there are some 14,000 combat troops stationed under the leadership of a two-star general, and, of course, at Colorado Springs there is the Air Force Academy—to mention just a couple of other military sites in Colorado. Given the presence of those prestigious military installations, one would expect to find among Denver residents—both military and civilian—a sense of pride in the United States and its national defense capabilities. Could their presumed patriotism make those families the real target of Educators for Social Responsibility?

Where the curriculum guidelines of the Educators for Social Responsibility do pertain to the classroom directly,

the following is an example of what's included. There is a section entitled "Inflammatory Words Can Teach You To Hate."[9] In this section "teachers and students are encouraged to consult the memoirs of Lt. William Calley to gain a better understanding of how his simplistic grasp of the inflammatory word "communism" led to his actions at Mylai."

Perhaps the most recent and widely publicized example of politically biased materials is NEA's *Choices: A Unit on Conflict and Nuclear War*, curriculum on nuclear war. Gary L. Bauer, Deputy Undersecretary for Planning, Budget and Evaluation has accused the NEA of initiating an "incredibly obvious drive to bring political indoctrination into the classroom."[10] Even the *Washington Post* recognized *Choices* for what it is: "political teaching."[11]

According to military expert Phyllis Schlafly, who heads the National Eagle Forum, "The goals of the nuclear war curricula are (a) to promote U.S. nuclear disarmament (b) to belittle the Soviet threat and (c) to propagandize for federal spending for social goals at the expense of national defense."[12]

One of the most objectionable teaching techniques employed in this curriculum is requiring students to keep a journal. The journal is objectionable because it violates a student's right to privacy. Students are required to write down their thoughts and feelings daily. The curriculum guide tells teachers, "If students hand in journals periodically, you may gain valuable information regarding their reactions to the unit (translated that means, are their attitudes being changed). It is suggested that you collect the journals and that students enter their thoughts and feelings in them daily."[13] By exposing their thoughts, the students are open to intimidation and peer pressure.

In discussing the politicization of American education, a distinction between education and politicization must be drawn. To begin drawing such a distinction, one might look to the intention of the authors of politically biased texts and classroom materials—is it to indoctrinate students? Brainwashing seems even more absurd; however, if one thinks of

brainwashing as "breaking down of established patterns of neural activity in a man's brain and building up fresh patterns, so that the man's beliefs become fixed in a new mold"[14] then the intention of such organizations as the Council on Interracial Books for Children just might be as bad as brainwashing.

The Council on Interracial Books for Children, a grantee of the U.S. Department of Education, published their *Guidelines for Selecting Bias-Free Textbooks and Storybooks.* According to David Asman, "The Council's primary objective extended well beyond eliminating racism and sexism."[15] The *Guidelines* state:

> Let's make it clear that we have no desire to see children's books that would solely help the dominated get a bigger piece of the pie. We don't like the pie, period. . . . We are not interested in seeing different people win a place in the status quo, the present social structure. We are challenging the structure itself because it promotes anti-human values.

One example of the work of the Council on Interracial Books for Children is "Violence, the Ku Klux Klan and the Struggle for Equality."[16] This program was prepared and published by the Connecticut Education Association, the Council on Interracial Books for Children, and the National Education Association.

Excerpts from the text lead teachers and students to believe that American society, not just the KKK, is racist. For example on page 21, one reads: "The Klan has arisen whenever the efforts of oppressed people, particularly black people, to improve their lives threaten the status quo. Thus, it is important to remember that the Klan is only the tip of the iceberg, the most visible and obvious manifestation of the entrenched racism in our society."[17]

According to Robert Bryan, the intent of the textbook writers is not to give the facts, but to give students impressions. Bryan says:

> Besides ignorance, another possible explanation of this extraordinary cavalier treatment of historical fact is that authors

are not especially interested in historical fact *per se*. What they want the textbook to create for the student is not an accurate *account* of the past, but a mere impression which will be consistent with their own beliefs.[18]

A second point to consider in drawing a distinction between education and politicization is to determine whether the materials are "designed to discover, affirm, and teach truth, including wisdom and concrete facts or rather are the materials designed to deceive and therefore promote . . . partial truth, a mixture of facts and non-facts?"[19]

Al Shanker, president of AFT, has criticized the NEA's *Choices* curriculum on this very basis. According to Shanker, "the NEA wants to press one viewpoint."[20] One example cited by Shanker to support his position is the following:

> The lesson plan is loaded with moving accounts by survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, themselves students when the bombs were dropped. A few lines describing why President Truman decided to drop them are inadequate. The stage is set. Then many more pages are given over to the destruction of nuclear war, the effects of a direct hit, the greater power of current weapons, etc. The United States is shown throughout as way ahead of the Soviet Union in nuclear arms—and this is presented as fact, not as an issue now under sharp debate. Moreover, in an effective section designed to surprise students (by first having them guess and then giving them supposedly accurate information), the students are presented with inflated "facts" on the proportion of the U.S. budget to be spent on national defense.[21]

As well as putting students into a more socialist mind set, teaching students with these sorts of politically-biased and inaccurate materials is detrimental to the academic achievement of students. In 1978, the National Assessment of Educational Progress reported that the ability of 17 year-olds to explain democracy's essentials had declined 12 points in 6 years.[22] In 1979, Gallup Poll reported that only 3% of the nation's 17- and 18-year olds could correctly identify Alaska and Hawaii as the last states to join the union.[23] A geography professor at Northern Arizona Univer-

sity found after testing his students that some of them could not find the continents, thought Paris was in Asia, and that the Falkland Islands were a few miles off the coast of England.[24]

Perhaps even more harmful to American education than politically-biased materials are politically biased and motivated teachers. Teachers interact with the students, teachers grade the students, are models for the students and speak with authority to students. When teachers go beyond educating students and begin to indoctrinate students they have gone beyond their limits, and failed in their duty to educate.

Current world affairs courses lend themselves to politicization. Students are particularly vulnerable in these courses when classroom discussions on current events, for example, the U.S. involvement in Central America or the Middle East, do not put the event into historical context or present pro's and con's of the issue equally and fairly. For example, in a Contemporary World Problems class in a high school in Mission Viejo, CA, parents voiced their objections to a teacher who was known to be a critic of the national government in general and the present administration specifically. His bias came through in class very clearly. For example, according to the parents' account, the teacher led a class discussion "on the topic of the U.S.'s mining of Nicaragua's harbor and used the opportunity to expound his own personal beliefs." The parent goes on to say:

> He (the teacher) made the statement that he thought Marxism would be best for Central America; and that the U.S. had no reason to be proud and should be ashamed. He said that President Reagan is the most radical president we've had in decades. He accused anyone who agreed with the President of 'blind nationalism,' . . . According to this parent when their children attempted to counter remarks made by this teacher, he "made them appear foolish or refused to acknowledge their upraised hand."[25]

Manifestations of this politicization process can be seen outside the classroom as well. One manifestation is the lobbying efforts of the teachers' unions for what are clearly

non-education issues. I'm speaking specifically of the NEA, the largest teachers' union in the U.S. NEA's legislative agenda for the 98th Congress sets forth the goals: nuclear disarmament, gun control, ERA, affirmative action, etc.[26] What is ironic is that on what are clearly education issues the NEA falls short. For example, the NEA lobbying efforts were put to work during the public comment period on the proposed regulations for the Hatch Amendment (also known as the Pupil Rights Amendment) which would give parents due process (the procedure for filing a complaint) when and if the Hatch Amendment were violated.[27]

On basic issues of fairness the NEA is also on record as opposing such measures. For example, in May 1984 NEA successfully got a week's delay on the equal access vote in the House (scheduled for May 7, 1984) and then brought 200 lobbyists to Washington to lobby against the bill.[28]

The NEA doesn't stop with setting forth a legislative agenda. The NEA actively trains its teachers to be lobbyists. "Since 1972, NEA professionals have run an estimated 30,000 teachers through political action workshops, in some cases giving them graduate-study credit for taking the program."[29]

According to Gilbert T. Sewall, former education editor of *Newsweek*,

> . . . NEA's emotional support of divisive, essentially non-educational issues such as nuclear disarmament, gun control, abortion rights and affirmative action has been sincere, but disruptive. Not least, it has created an official teacher's outlook at odds with many of the families and communities that teachers serve.[30]

Time and time again, statements are made by NEA national and state leaders that the NEA's goal is to preserve and protect its members' rights rather than fulfill their responsibility to parents and students. For example, the Oregon State affiliate sent a bulletin to its members which said, ". . . the major purpose of our Association is not the education of children, rather it is as ought to be, the extension and/or preservation of our members' rights. We

earnestly care about the kids and learning, but it is secondary to the other goals."[31]

Participation in the political process is not wrong—in a democratic society it is expected. However, the leadership of the NEA has adopted a left-wing agenda and has put the organization's resources, body and soul, to the promulgation of political indoctrination.[32] Addressing the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament, Willard McGuire, then NEA president, said:

> . . . we must teach our students that positions their governments take are not necessarily the right positions. And that they, like their teachers, have not only a right, but an obligation to protest when their government's action, as in the case of the proliferation of nuclear weapons, threaten our very existence.[33]

The NEA is a strong political force. According to Robert Pear author of "Democrats Court Teachers at Gathering," the NEA, a potent force in Democratic politics, sent more delegates to the party's 1980 convention than any state and hopes to raise $4 million to assist candidates for the presidency and Congress in 1934.[34]

The force of the NEA is real. "State legislators who are otherwise staunch conservatives quake in their boots at the prospect of antagonizing the NEA."[35] For example, a state legislator on a Reagan appointed Advisory Council on Education "was willing to support all aspects of Reagan's education program until NEA was criticized. There, he backed off, mumbling about how the NEA was doing its job as they saw it, and wasn't so bad."[36]

Another manifestation of the presence of politics is the openly active participation of teachers in partisan campaigns. The NEA adopts resolutions at its annual meetings urging all teachers to "devote at least 10 hours" to campaigning for NEA-backed candidates.[37] The NEA-backed candidates are liberal. For example, in 1981-82, Paul Sarbanes (D-MD) was given $10,000, Edward Kennedy (D-MA) was given $9,500, Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) was given $5,000 and Howard Metzenbaum (D-OH) was given $2,500.[38]

A recent but typical example of teacher union members working against a political candidate at the precinct level was reported in the *Washington Post* in an article headlined, "Fairfax Teachers Group Works to Defeat Herrity." The opening paragraph flaunted before the public the ability of the union to turn teachers into campaign workers:

> The Fairfax Education Association has launched an unprecedented effort to knock County Supervisor Chairman John F. Herrity out of office, complete with radio ads, more than 1,000 teachers going door-to-door and 100 teachers working phone banks.[39]

According to the article, the NEA sent out four mailings on behalf of Herrity's opponent, Democrat Patricia Watt, and even paid for several large Watt signs. In spite of the massive campaign waged against him by the NEA, Republican Herrity was victorious on election day. Herrity is a moderately conservative Republican, and Watt is a liberal Democrat.

On the national scene, the NEA was a significant political force in the Pennsylvania primary. According to a report in NEA's own weekly newsletter for NEA leaders, "Mondale won 124 of the state's delegates compared to only 16 for Gary Hart. And NEA members were particularly important in those delegate victories. PSEA members were on the ballot as Mondale delegates in 18 of the state's 23 congressional districts." The report goes on to say, "PSEA provided a major effort in turning out NEA members for the primary. Association activists made over 20,000 phone calls to members, mailed 40,000 letters and distributed 100,000 polling cards."[40]

Reform

Fundamental changes have to be made in the educational system in this country in order to successfully thwart the politicization of American education. Teachers must recognize and accept their professional responsibilities and curriculum must be reformed so that academic integrity is restored.

As discussed, education is the transmittal of knowledge

and skills. Students should learn history, english, literature, math and science within the context of Western civilization. Therefore, the public school curriculum should reflect this. Only with a sense of where we have come from and where, as Americans, we are headed will students be able to function as citizens.

In the past year, one has heard a lot about a return to basics. There are basic skills to be learned, namely to read, write and compute. Having mastered these, students must learn the content of a solid core curriculum in the humanities and science. If students learn about world history, literature, government, etc., they will be able then to discuss intelligently and take positions on controversial issues such as the nuclear arms, U.S. involvement in Central America or the Middle East without the "help" of the various classes being taught today under the guise of just raising the issue.

Our purpose in education should be to educate students, thereby liberating them rather than indoctrinating them in liberal ideology so that they become dependent on others for answers and direction.

Not only must a core curriculum be restored, but the textbooks used must be factually accurate and fair in interpretation by the authors. Shared values such as honesty, charity, civility, courage, liberty should come through in the text. The content should be upgraded.

Textbooks publishers have given in to special interest groups. As discussed earlier, the pressure is on to eliminate sexism and racism, to the extent that the Council on Interracial Books seeks to change students attitudes and thought processes rather than teach them history or American Government or literature. Those critical of the American foreign policies clash with those loyal to the U.S. and the result is a textbook inaccurate and slanted in one direction or the other.

Perhaps worst of all, the textbooks are of lower quality, demanding less of the students in order to master the materials presented. Since schools are demanding less, the textbook publishers are simply responding to the demand.

The majority of teachers do rely on textbooks as a tool. In

his article "The Politics of Textbooks Adoption," Raymond English stated that approximately 80% of the knowledge to which students are exposed comes from a textbook.[41] Other studies estimate that as much as 95% of classroom time involves the use of textbooks. The influence of textbooks on education demands the attention of school boards, administrators and parents.

The selection and adoption of textbooks is political in itself. Seventeen states have centralized systems of textbook selection. Publishers respond to the selection committees' ideas rather than lose the sale. The textbook review process in each state must be evaluated and changed as needed in order to restore local control of the textbook selection process. Textbook review procedures must include parents and concerned citizens in the community. The forum, for review, and the time frame should allow for honest and open dialogue about the possible texts. Decisions made should reflect community values, goals and ideals.

The teaching profession, itself, must above all reassess its purpose, accept its professional responsibility and respond to the parents in the community in the education of their children.

The teaching profession seems to be in a crisis. The leaders of the largest teachers union in the country are leading the teachers in this country down a dangerous course. Pursuing a left-wing legislative agenda at the expense of educational excellence, the NEA leadership is shirking its responsibilities. Caught up in their "rights" as teachers, these teachers have failed to acknowledge the responsibilities that come with the rights. Consequently, the one-time professional organization has become nothing more than a labor union concerned with getting more; more money, more power, more control. Falling to the way side is any concern about standards within the profession, accountability to the profession itself and the students and parents in the community whom teachers serve. I am talking about accountability in specific terms such as can students read, write, compute, analyze and reason, but also

in the much broader picture, namely what have these teachers done for our civilization.

The teaching profession must come to terms with these issues. Teachers must rediscover their profession and embark on a course of reform within the profession. First, public school teachers are state employees unlike doctors and lawyers, nevertheless, teachers must recognize and accept their responsibilities to the profession itself. Looking to the professions of law and medicine for guidance, I suggest that teachers consider the following: state exams for licensing, peer review, and a keen interest in the education of future teachers.

First, state licensing. Since the National Commission on Excellence in Education issued its report last year, there has been an effort to require that teachers pass a basic competency exam before being licensed to teach. This initiative has met with resistance all the way by the National Education Association, yet it is something that doctors and lawyers have had to do for years. It seems even more imperative that public school teachers be required to pass such an exam since parents of public school children have no real choice in the matter of who their children's teachers will be (as opposed to choosing doctors and lawyers). It is in the public interest that teachers be qualified to teach and an exam prior to licensing seems to be the simplest and most efficient way to assess a teacher's ability.

Secondly, peer review. Lawyers have a code of ethics as do doctors. Law students and medical students learn these basic rules in classes like professional responsibility. Once in the profession, lawyers and doctors see to it that their colleagues abide by these rules—the integrity of the profession is at stake. When there is a violation, such as comingling the funds or a conflict of interest, individual attorneys are reprimanded, and, if the violation is grave enough the attorney is disbarred. He/she is no longer able to practice law.

The peer pressure (along with competition) within these professions works to keep the services offered first rate and

ethical. Ultimately, the beneficiaries of this peer pressure are the public who seek the advice and counsel of lawyers and doctors. Teachers should follow suit.

Peer review within the teaching profession could work for the public instead of against us. It is not surprising that peer review is an element of many of the reform measures proposed in the last year, for example, merit pay and master teacher plans. It is also not surprising that the National Education Association has been against these reforms. If teachers were held to high standards by one another with the threat of reprimand, the schools would be used much less to propagandize students. Moreover, once again, such propagandizing could be considered an aberration.

Third, teachers should take an interest in the education of future teachers. In law school, more so than medical school, generally students learn the law, with a minimum exposure to the mechanics of applying the law. There are few "methods" courses in law schools. Once the law student has a good understanding of the law, he or she will begin the second phase of learning in a law office as a law clerk. This is often done while the student continues at school. By the time the student graduates and takes the bar exam, he or she is ready to be hired as an associate equipped with a legal education and the skills to apply the education in real life, if you will. During their course of studies, law students are helped along the way by lawyers. Lawyers take an interest in the education of young lawyers. There is a sense of comaraderie.

The education of teachers should take a similar course. The preparation young teachers receive in the classroom should be focused on their selected field of study, be it science, math, the humanities, foreign language, or whatever. A minimum amount of time should be spent on the teacher education courses. Hands-on experience in the classroom would be much more useful.

Toward this end, I think it is important to begin to allow students interested in being teachers to spend some time in college in their chosen field of study. Then have the

student educated in his field, learn how to teach the subject through an internship in the classroom. Proposals, such as that in the state of New Jersey, allowing students with a bachelor's degree to teach without having to take umpteen credits of "methods" courses should be seriously considered by each state.[42]

These goals are long term. However, teachers, parents and concerned citizens can begin moving now toward their implementation. For example, teachers who are members of the National Education Association should educate themselves as to what the leadership is doing with the organization and its funds. The NEA is nominally a democratic organization. Teachers must work within the organization to bring it back to its origins—namely, a PROFESSIONAL organization for teachers. Teachers must regain the respect of the parents and the community and consequently their support. Local school boards can require their teachers—including math and science teachers—to take summer courses in the humanities in order to strengthen the foundation from which they are teaching by putting it within the context of Western civilization. Parents and citizens can begin immediately to involve themselves in the selection and evaluation of classroom textbooks and curricula. The responsibility for reform lies with all of us.

In remarks given at the University of Texas at Austin last year, Vice-President George Bush summed up our responsibility in education in clear, eloquent language. He said:

> Education, it has been said, represents the soul of society as it passes from one generation to the next. That thought should make us sober. All that we are—all great devotions, all the crucial writings, and the whole mass of technical knowledge that have produced a civilization in which millions lived in the midst of freedom and abundance—all these stand perched at the edge of an abyss each time one generation attempts to educate the next.
>
> If we stumble once, we are lost. If we fail to instruct our children in reason, justice, religion and liberty, they will not know these virtues but will live instead in the twilight of a

world in which the great truths have been forgotten. Knowledge represents a trust handed down to us by the generations. To pass that trust on intact—to educate—represents no mere task, but a high duty."

April 7, 1983

Notes

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2. Edwin J. Delattre, 'No Empty Heads, No Hallow Chests," *American Educator*, Vol. 5, No. 2, Summer 1981, p. 20.
3. Allan Brownfeld, *Washington Times*, January 31, 1983.
4. NEA Convention, 1982.
5. *Classroom Treatment of The Right to Work*, CEAFU, Fairfax, Va., May 1979.
6. Robert Bryan, *History, Pseudo-History, Anti-History: How Public School Textbooks Treat Religion*, (Washington, D. C. Learn, Inc., 1984).
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9. Chester E. Finn, op. cit., p. 39.
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20. "Where We Stand," Al Shanker, *New York Times*, April 17, 1983.
21. Ibid.
22. 1978 National Assessment of Educational Progress.
23. Gallup Poll, 1979.
24. *Tucson Citizen*, March 3, 1983.

25. Parent, Mission Viejo, CA, May 1984 (Correspondence to Molly Moore, U.S. Department of Education).
26. "The NEA Legislative Program for the 98th Congress," *Today's Education*, 1983, p. 114.
27. Basically, the Hatch Amendment requires that parents give their permission before their children submit to any psychological examination, testing or treatment. (P.L. 95-561, The Education Amendments of 1978).
28. The Equal Access bill would give religious groups the same access to school facilities as other student groups. (Congressman Bonker D-WA. 98th Congress. Equal Access H.R. 5345).
29. Eugene H. Methvin, "The NEA: A Washington Lobby Run Rampant," *Reader's Digest*, November 1978.
30. *Wall Street Journal*, January 5, 1983.
31. *The American School Board Journal*, January 1982.
32. It must be noted that on many issues the NEA leadership does not adequately represent its memberships interest. For example, in Harrisburg, PA, the NEA leaders acted on their own in joining a coalition against nuclear energy. This action was taken " . . . not only without the sanction of the Representative Assembly, but over the objection of the Pennsylvania State affiliate." Robert Kagan, "A Relic of the New Age: The National Education Association" *The American Spectator*, February 1982.
33. Chester E. Finn, "Teacher Politics," *Commentary*, February 1983.
34. *New York Times*, July 3, 1983.
35. *Crisis in Education Parent Power vs. the Establishment*, p. 11.
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